

## FILM HISTORY I

### PAPER ASSIGNMENT #1

Your assignment is to write a clear and concise essay of 500 to 700 words (approximately three double-spaced typewritten pages) on one of the following topics:

1. Comedy:

Compare and contrast the comedic styles of two or more silent comedians, such as Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, Mack Sennett's Keystone Cops, Harry Langdon, or Laurel and Hardy. (Support your essay with film references).

For instance, you might choose to compare one of the following:

- The comedic shorts of Chaplin to those of Keaton and/or Lloyd
- Mack Sennett's Keystone Kops to Laurel and Hardy
- Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* (1925) to Keaton's *The General* (1927)

(Hint: you may find it helpful to discuss such topics as pantomime, visual humor, characterization, use of gags and trajectories, use of sound, theme, pacing, framing, etc.).

2. Define and describe the evolution of the cinematic language of the early silent cinema. (Support your essay with film references).

(Hint: you may find it helpful to refer to the following artists: the Lumiere Brothers, Melies, Edwin S. Porter, and D.W. Griffith).

3. Define and describe the technological evolution of early silent cinema machines (including motion picture cameras and projectors).

(Hint: you may find it helpful to refer to the following inventors: Muybridge, Marey, Edison, and Dickson).

4. Alternative to paper:

Students may write and produce a short film, video, or digital movie which would effectively express or illustrate the comedic style of a silent comedian or comedic team. (The maximum length of the production is ten minutes.)